3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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775 In the cases of the rest (viz. those in Heaven), they have to stay there till the third generation. To make the position clear, we should remember that the Santals worship ancestor-spirits upto the grandfather (inclusive). When with the death of the house-holder and the consequent change in generations, the particular man in *Serma* (Heaven) does not any more receive propitiation on earth, his period of stay lasts till then. To illustrate the matter, let us take a concrete case. A house-holder worships ancestor-spirits upto his grandfather X. When the house-holder dies and becomes an ancestor-spirit himself, X becomes a great-grandfather to the son of the house-holder (now dead) and is re-born on the earth.

Conclusion

76 77 Such in brief are the funeral ceremonies, and the ideas of Heaven and Hell obtaining amongst the Santals. In all the ceremonials attending death, the members of the tribe take all possible precautions so that the released spirit may not haunt the abode of his near and dear ones, and may be admitted by the gods after proper purification. The other aim of the rituals is to see that the spirit may have rest, after all the toils and turmoils of 761 life, along with the ancestors. It is with a supernatural fear that the Santal looks upon death, the

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Religion of the Santals

In the foregoing pages we have noticed the various classes of Santal deities. The question now naturally arises if the religious practices of the Santals are not some form of an active worship of some deities and lesser spirits, together with a vague belief in souls and a future existence connoted by the term 'Animism.' One is puzzled to think, as Risley was, as to what is the exact idea of the Santal when he thinks about the spirits, say of the hills. Is it a reverence for the spirit of the flesh ? Does he think he is in danger of being ruined by it ? Risley says, "No." According to him, when a Santal thinks of a tiger-spirit, he does so from the "vague dread of a mysterious tiger-power or tiger-demon, the essence and archetype of all tigers, whose vengeance no man.....could hope to escape."[1]

But it must be noted, however, that the conception of abstract power in itself independent of a material vehicle, is difficult for the aboriginal mind. Thus, to the Santal, *Thàkur Jiu* or *Dhòròm* is not an abstract conception, but a real entity, with feelings and desires akin to those of man. For his Ancestor Spirits in particular, he exhibits filial devotion which may be likened to the Hindu

1 Risley, *People of India*, page 225.